

**CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
WELLNESS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Tuesday, January 17, 2012**

**4:00 p.m.**

**Briggs Building (Reed Conference Room)**

**845 Park Avenue**

**MINUTES**

**A meeting of the Wellness Sub-committee was held on the above date at 4:00 p.m. with the following members present: Janice Ruggieri, Chairperson, Deb Greifer, Cheryl Rogers, Lynne Conca, Tammy Eaton, Karin Wetherill, Aaron Lenart, Kiersten Marek, Katie Kostiew, Audrey Guttin, Jeannine Nota, and Deb Svitil.**

**At this time, Mrs. Ruggieri welcomed everyone to the meeting.**

**Mrs. Ruggieri commented on a couple of things that has come up since our last meeting to be reviewed tonight.**

**Mrs. Ruggieri reported that she is working on a Physical Education Grant and one of the things that came up was the Wellness Policy. She noted that our Wellness Policy is actually very strong; however, there were a couple of things that are missing and they would like to add to it.**

**1. The Birthday Food issue – What they would like to do is clearly state in their policy to take the ownership off of the principals so that they don't continually have to deal with this issue. We would like to make it clear that we don't want people bringing food in for birthdays and that there's other ways of celebrating them. Most schools have already taken that step but every year there are new children coming in, etc. We want to take that ownership off of the principals and get it into our policy and get it out to the public, in general. A discussion ensued regarding offerings and language for the policy.**

**2. Our policy on-line needs to be updated. When Mrs. Ruggieri was looking at it, she was trying to get the exact wording that they had just redone last year and with Sodexo coming on board and all the language they did for sales of food and ice cream, etc.; with the State changes. That's not on-line so we have to find out how to get that updated.**

**3. The City Council had to put forth a resolution to the General Assembly regarding advertising on school buses. Mrs. Ruggieri added that she would like to get a policy in place because the way it was written in the General Assembly, it does not have any parameters around it and she would prefer that the School Committee have something in place if it does get passed; she would like to get something to say, "Yes, we agree that advertising on buses is a great way to get revenue into our schools; however, we want to continue to promote the same wellness guidelines that we use in our schools".**

**She also noted that she received a letter from the Red Center for Food Policy and Obesity regarding this vote on this policy and they have done studies of advertising, etc. They were concerned and gave Mrs. Ruggieri some references to look at. She did write them back and assured them that it was something that they will incorporate into our Wellness Policy.**

**4. Recess Issue – Mrs. Ruggieri noted that what they want to do is put something out there that says, “We recognize the importance of recess; we also recognize the limitations and the importance of disciplinary tools.” We don’t want to prohibit; we just want to give guide lines or suggestions. In addition, Mrs. Ruggieri would like to try to pilot one or two schools with those classroom exercise breaks. The third and fourth graders were the largest offenders when it came to the disciplinary issues when Dr. Lundsten had done a survey for us last year. Those were the grades where there seemed to be the most incidences occurring; maybe those would be the grades to focus on to say, “Let’s give these kids that little break and maybe that will help disburse some of that energy”.**

**Numbers 1 – 4, above, would be the focuses that this committee would be working on this year. Mrs. Ruggieri noted that it might be easier to break it down to smaller groups working on each of these issues and then coming back to the table with what they had and discuss the issues as a group and then moving forward with getting the policy read to the entire School Committee.**

**At this time, Mrs. Ruggieri asked if there were any questions or concerns; the following items were discussed:**

- Handbooks passed out at the beginning of the school year; would they include the Wellness Policy or the birthday policy and if parents actually do read it. A discussion ensued. Mrs. Ruggieri suggested that they come up with some kind of notice or flyer that the principals can send out through their list serve at the beginning of the year.**
- Ms. Witherill reported that there are a couple of districts that have designed a tri-fold brochure. She noted that she would share those with the committee. They are more for elementary schools.**
- List for alternatives for birthday celebrations; ideas about recognition and privileges'. Ms. Witherill also noted that she brought in an article from the New York Times noting the Three R's Crucial in Recess. The committee talked about including this in guidelines, etc. Ms Witherill stated that she would e-mail this article to Mrs. Ruggieri, for the file.**
- Lynn Conca and Aaron Lenart – Formatted a letter that went home to all parents regarding posting of allergies when the child was in the lunch line and at the site of paying for their meal; something would pop up stating that certain allergies pertain to that person. That would be the last person to see that student before he/she sat down to eat. They've gotten many back that they have put up. This is a liability thing. They also spoke on the different allergies they've seen.**
- Smoothie Bar – Audrey Guttin noted that she did find the Smoothie Bar in the backroom of the cafeteria at West. A discussion ensued.**

**There are two industrial size blenders and this program could be implemented again.**

- Ms. Conca reported that they are still in the process of Breakfast in the Classroom. She noted that a couple of people in the district are going to Providence to see how it's run. This will most likely be piloted at Edgewood Highland.**

- Culinary Grant – See if we can involve the CAC&TC. The recent round; the applications had to be submitted at the end of September. The next cycle will be at the end of March; however, it isn't clear what the feedback is. It is an after school cooking program for kids with a lot of different elements to it.**

- A program called Action for Healthy Kids was discussed. They have really great web-n-r's which might be of interest to the committee. It is a national organization that works to improve school foods and health, etc. They're doing a web-n-r series on Classroom Breakfast Programs and the last one had food service people come out from California and talk about the different distribution methods, the pros and the cons, and how you work with teachers and principals.**

- Mrs. Nota-Masse reported that she did meet with the YMCA Director and Dennis Curran and Mike Traficante. They are also looking at the option of using the Pastore Center during the day for the Charter School students. They met and toured the facility.**

- It was reported that Rob Houston from the YMCA has been doing the exercise breaks at some of the schools and it has been going really well and it's been a really good experience. It was noted that this is something that is especially useful during the NECAP testing – for**

**5-10 minutes doing the exercise breaks to help the students to refocus.**

**At this time, Mrs. Ruggieri suggested volunteers from the committee to work on the different policies they are trying to put together. The following people agreed to offer their services to:**

**Birthday Policy – Tammy Eaton**

**Recess – Kiersten Marek**

**Bus Ad – Janice Ruggieri**

**with work starting for the March meeting.**

**They will continue working on the Smoothie Program, noting the special guidelines they were using and how the program functioned. Mrs. Guttin spoke on this issue.**

**Mrs. Ruggieri added that she will try to get something out in the schools on the Exercise Program; she will look into this program and talk to administration as far as piloting this program.**

**Tammy Eaton asked about the Popcorn Machine question. Mrs. Ruggieri reported that the machine is not theirs; they borrowed it from someone and they haven't used it and are not planning on selling. This is in regards to a rumor that one of the schools had bought a popcorn machine and was selling popcorn. This was not true; however, she suggested that they send something out to the**

principals, again, just as a general reminder that they can't sell food during the day.

Mrs. Conca reported that they are going to do a "Future Chef Competition" at the middle schools for a healthy breakfast recipe. It will be on March 8th at Park View Middle School and will be for any Middle School Student who wants to submit a recipe and compete and there will be judges. This is the second year; they also did it two years ago. They are hoping to get at least ten students to participate. There will be a prize but they haven't come up with that yet. They've talked about several items that are popular with kids now. She noted that whoever wins this competition, will be entered into the National Competition. Sodexo sponsors this event. Mrs. Conca added that West Warwick had a finalist last year. A discussion ensued. Last year was elementary children, this year is middle school students and hopefully, next year will be high school students.

Ms. Wetherill reported the following upcoming events; there will be three meetings/workshops coming up:

1. Annual Farm-to-School meeting that happens every year at DEM in Providence. Congressman Langevin attended a couple last week. He is very much in support of this and looking at trying to get more funding from the Feds in support of it. Held February 1st at 1:30.
2. Commodity Food Show which is something that the Food Service Directors go to every year and they taste foods from different processors and see what is available from the Federal Commodity

**Program. This will be held on February 14th at 2:30 in West Warwick.**

**3. Composting – First annual Compost Conference and Trade Show is happening on February 27th on North Main Street in Pawtucket.**

**The next meeting of the Wellness Sub-committee will be held on Monday, March 19, 2012 at 4:00 p.m. here in the Briggs Building Conference Room.**

**There being no further business to discuss with this sub-committee, the meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Gail Leone**

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**Recording Secretary**